



WILLIAM SHATNER and LEONARD NIMOY on location during filming of *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*.

Star trek crew take off for home voyage

From MICHAEL O'REGAN in New York

They all were strangely dressed in suits and robes straight from the 23rd Century.

But no one gave them a second glance as they

wandered the San Francisco streets.

Even the guy with the pointy ears went unnoticed.

But San Franciscans are a pretty way-out bunch themselves, as the cast and crew of *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* found recently.

Leonard Nimoy, who doubles as both star and director of the new \$23 million adventure, recalled that after filming one on-location scene in which he was dressed in a flowing, white robe, a woman approached the set.

"She came up and said, 'I thought you were a monk or a priest'," he laughed.

Despite the lack of recognition by the locals, Nimoy and the rest of the old *Enterprise* crew are confident moviegoers around the world will sit down and take notice when the blockbuster opens in theatres this Christmas.

And in a welcome move, Nimoy, 55, who also directed *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, has ensured the new film is closest in form and feeling to the original television series which first showed in the US 20 years ago.

"It has the most down-to-earth structure — pardon the pun — of all four films," he said.

"I hope this picture will be accessible to somebody who doesn't know anything about *Star Trek*, but there are references to the other pictures — moments when they'll feel out of it."

The *Voyage Home*, which reunites Admiral Kirk (William Shatner), Spock, McCoy (DeForest Kelly) and the rest of the old crew, picks up where *Star Trek III* left off.

As all Trekkies worth their weight in dilithium crystals know, when last we saw the *Enterprise* crew they were on the planet Vulcan, after the high priestess T'Pol restored the dead Spock's 'katra' or life force.

Although Spock is back in one piece, he is still not his former self and submits to three months of re-education before joining Kirk and the others as they head back to Starfleet headquarters in San Francisco in a ship they commandeered from a group of hapless — and very dead — Klingons.

The *Enterprise*, you will recall, was destroyed in III. Kirk rigged the great ship to self-destruct, then beamed aboard the Klingon warriors.

At the start of *The Voyage Home*, Kirk and company are returning to

base to face what could be very serious charges for disobeying Starfleet command orders forbidding them from returning to the planet Genesis.

While on the journey home, Spock's highly-sensitive ears pick up a strange signal that warns of a catastrophe which may destroy Earth.

To save the planet, like they did in the celebrated episode *City on the Edge of Forever* — in which a young Joan Collins guest starred — Kirk and the crew beam themselves back in time to San Francisco, circa 1986.

The ensuing drama, which combines suspense, romance (Kirk always had an eye for the ladies, even if they are old enough to be his grandmother 12 times removed) and lots of culture-clash comedy, is said by those in the know to be the best *Trek* film to date.

Even the man whose vision led to the original series, Gene Roddenberry, said the script was 'so good it scared me'.

And Roddenberry is reportedly enthusiastic with the strong ecological message contained in the new film.

In the long run, however, it won't be ecology, messages or anything so noble that will have the turnstiles clicking.

It'll be good-old fashioned adventure, fun, and the interplays between Kirk, Spock and McCoy — the lifeblood of the series — that ropes them in.

The *Voyage Home* also signals the return to the *Star Trek* family of Spock's human mother, Amanda, played by Jane Wyatt, who originated this role in the 1967 TV episode *Journey to Babel*. His Vulcan father, Sarek, played by Mark Leonard, also makes an appearance.

Paramount Pictures hope *The Voyage Home* will continue the successful run of the earlier *Trek* films, which all did big business at the box office and continue to do so in the video stores.

The original 1979 movie grossed a record \$17 million in its first week and finished up taking \$90 million in America.

The second, *The Wrath of Khan*, picked up \$31 million in 10 days, making it the biggest winner for that period in Paramount's history. Its final gross was \$80 million.

The *Search for Spock*, which marked Nimoy's debut as director, was also a major hit, pulling in \$77 million.

'I really thought you were monk or priest'